DC
SUICIDE SQUAD
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SUICIDE SQUAD
TIGER, TIGER, BURNING BRIGHT!
OSTRANDER
GREENBERGER
McDONNELL
ISHERWOOD

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G-5400
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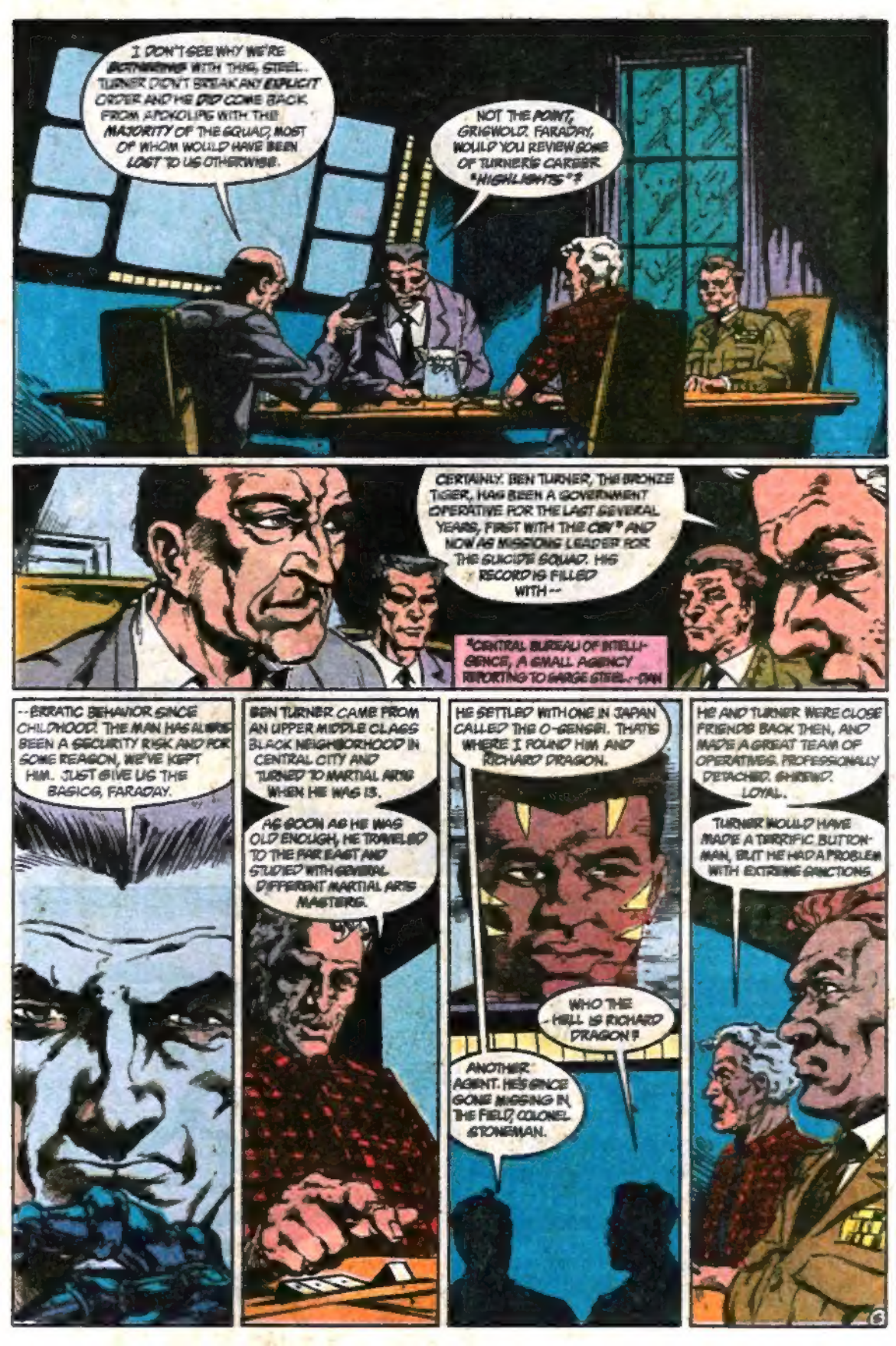
LOUISIANA ORDNANCE ASSOCIATION
YES MA'AM, THE MATERIAL IS ALL GENUINE. YES, MA'AM...
...I AM AS SHOCKED AS YOU. AMANDA WALLER FOOLED EVERYONE INTO THINKING SHE STEPPED DOWN, WHEN IN FACT SHE STILL RUNS THAT SUICIDE SQUAD.
OH, I AM CERTAIN YOU WILL DO THE RIGHT THING WITH THE INFORMATION, MISS TRENT. I AM ONLY TOO GLAD TO HELP OUR FOURTH ESTATE. THE FINAL DOCUMENTS ARE ON THEIR WAY.
THE MATERIAL HAS HER CONVINCED. IT MIGHT EVEN RUN IN TONIGHT'S EDITION IF THE FINAL CORROBORATION GETS THERE IN TIME.
SEE TO IT, BOCOR.
ONCE AGAIN, THE SUICIDE SQUAD IS TIED TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. WE BUT MAKE ONE TELEPHONE CALL, AND THERE WILL BE SCANDAL AGAIN. BON.

IS THIS THE COCAINE FROM OUR LABORATORY? WITH THE TETRODO-TOXIN ADDED?
YES, EXCELLENCY.
ARE OUR AGENTS READY TO DISTRIBUTE THE NEW PRODUCT?
YES, AND YOUR PLAN HAS BEEN RELAYED TO ALL CONCERNED.
WE'LL GIVE AWAY OVER 100 KILOS IN MAJOR CITIES AROUND THE COUNTRY, STARTING TOMORROW--AS THE SCHOOLS LET OUT. THIS WILL GET US MAXIMUM SATURATION.
THEN, IN JUST A FEW HOURS, THEY WILL LEARN THAT IT HAS HIGHER THAN NORMAL ADDICTIVE PROPERTIES.
THE EXTRACT WILL ALSO TURN THEM INTO MINDLESS SLAVES--ZUVEMBI FOR US TO CALL UPON AS AN ARMY. YOUR ARMY, DAMBALLAH.
WITHIN A WEEK WE'LL HAVE THOUSANDS OF USERS IN AMERICA TO CALL UPON. UNTIL THEN, OF COURSE, OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES WILL BE SERIOUSLY STRAINED. SHOULD ANYTHING INTERFERE ...WE'LL BE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE.
SO BE IT, BOCOR. WE HAVE NEED FOR AN ARMY. THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECLARED WAR ON DRUGS. EH, BIEN. THEY SHALL LEARN THAT DRUGS CAN ALSO MAKE WAR ON THEM.
WITH THEIR OWN CHILDREN WE SHALL ASSASSINATE THEIR LEADERS, THEIR JUDGES, THEIR POLICE, ANYONE WHO OPPOSES US. AND BY FEAR THEY SHALL LEARN NOT TO OPPOSE US.

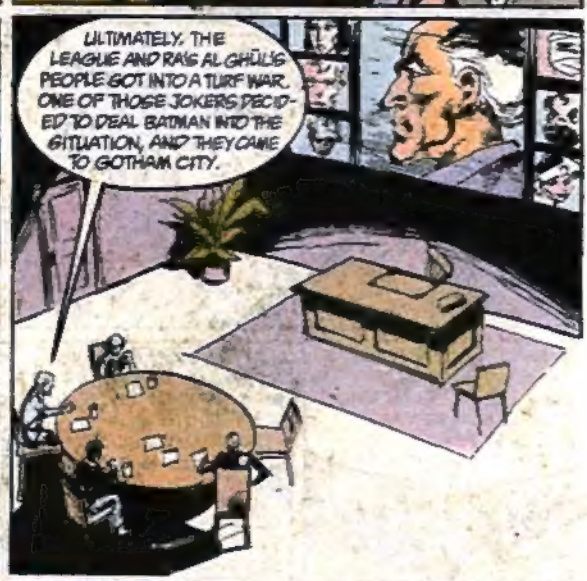
THERE IS A WAY OUR PLAN COULD FAIL, OF COURSE.
A WAY YOU HAVE NOT FORESEEN, BOCOR.
WHAT IF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT LEGALIZES COCAINE IN THE NEXT 24 HOURS? IT WILL SPOIL OUR DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM.
HAHAHA HAHAHA HAHAHA
I'M TELLING YOU, BEN, THIS IS GOING TO GO DOWN BADLY. STEEL WANTS YOUR HEAD.
HUSH, MARI. STEEL WANTS TO YELL AND I'M GOING TO LET HIM.
I GOT THE TEAM BACK FROM APOKOLIPS. NOW I CAN GO TEAR UP THE LOA FOR STEEL—SO HE'LL YELL AND THE NSC WILL SLEEP EASIER.
WE'LL SEE, BEN.
4


I DON'T SEE WHY WE'RE BOTHERING WITH THIS, STEEL.. TURNER DIDN'T BREAK ANY EXPLICIT ORDER AND HE DID COME BACK FROM APOKOLIPS WITH THE MAJORITY OF THE SQUAD, MOST OF WHOM WOULD HAVE BEEN LOST TO US OTHERWISE.
NOT THE POINT, GRISWOLD. FARADAY, WOULD YOU REVIEW SOME OF TURNER'S CAREER "HIGHLIGHTS"?
CERTAINLY. BEN TURNER, THE BRONZE TIGER, HAS BEEN A GOVERNMENT OPERATIVE FOR THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, FIRST WITH THE CBI* AND NOW AS MISSIONS LEADER FOR THE SUICIDE SQUAD. HIS RECORD IS FILLED WITH --
*CENTRAL BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE, A SMALL AGENCY REPORTING TO SARGE STEEL.--DAN
--ERRATIC BEHAVIOR SINCE CHILDHOOD. THE MAN HAS ALWAYS BEEN A SECURITY RISK AND FOR SOME REASON, WE'VE KEPT HIM. JUST GIVE US THE BASICS, FARADAY.
BEN TURNER CAME FROM AN UPPER MIDDLE CLASS BLACK NEIGHBORHOOD IN CENTRAL CITY AND TURNED TO MARTIAL ARTS WHEN HE WAS 13.
AS SOON AS HE WAS OLD ENOUGH, HE TRAVELED TO THE FAR EAST AND STUDIED WITH SEVERAL DIFFERENT MARTIAL ARTS MASTERS.
HE SETTLED WITH ONE IN JAPAN CALLED THE O-GENSAI. THAT'S WHERE I FOUND HIM AND RICHARD DRAGON.
WHO THE HELL IS RICHARD DRAGON?
ANOTHER AGENT. HE'S SINCE GONE MISSING IN THE FIELD, COLONEL STONEMAN.
HE AND TURNER WERE CLOSE FRIENDS BACK THEN, AND MADE A GREAT TEAM OF OPERATIVES. PROFESSIONALLY DETACHED, SHREWD, LOYAL.
TURNER WOULD HAVE MADE A TERRIFIC BUTTON-MAN, BUT HE HAD A PROBLEM WITH EXTREME SANCTIONS.

I HAD ASSIGNED THE TWO OF THEM TO TAKE DOWN THE LEAGUE OF ASSASSINS. THE LEAGUE DISCOVERED THEM, THOUGH, AND KILLED BEN'S FIANCEE, NAME OF MIYOSHI.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE LEAGUE CAPTURED BEN. AT THE TIME, WE THOUGHT THEY KILLED HIM.
WE LATER LEARNED HE WAS THIS NEW AGENT, THE BRONZE TIGER.

HE WAS ONE OF THEM. KILLING ON THREE CONTINENTS. HE BECAME ONE OF OUR MOST WANTED. WE LEARNED FROM ONE CAPTURED AGENT THAT TURNER HAD BEEN BRAINWASHED INTO WORKING FOR THE LEAGUE.

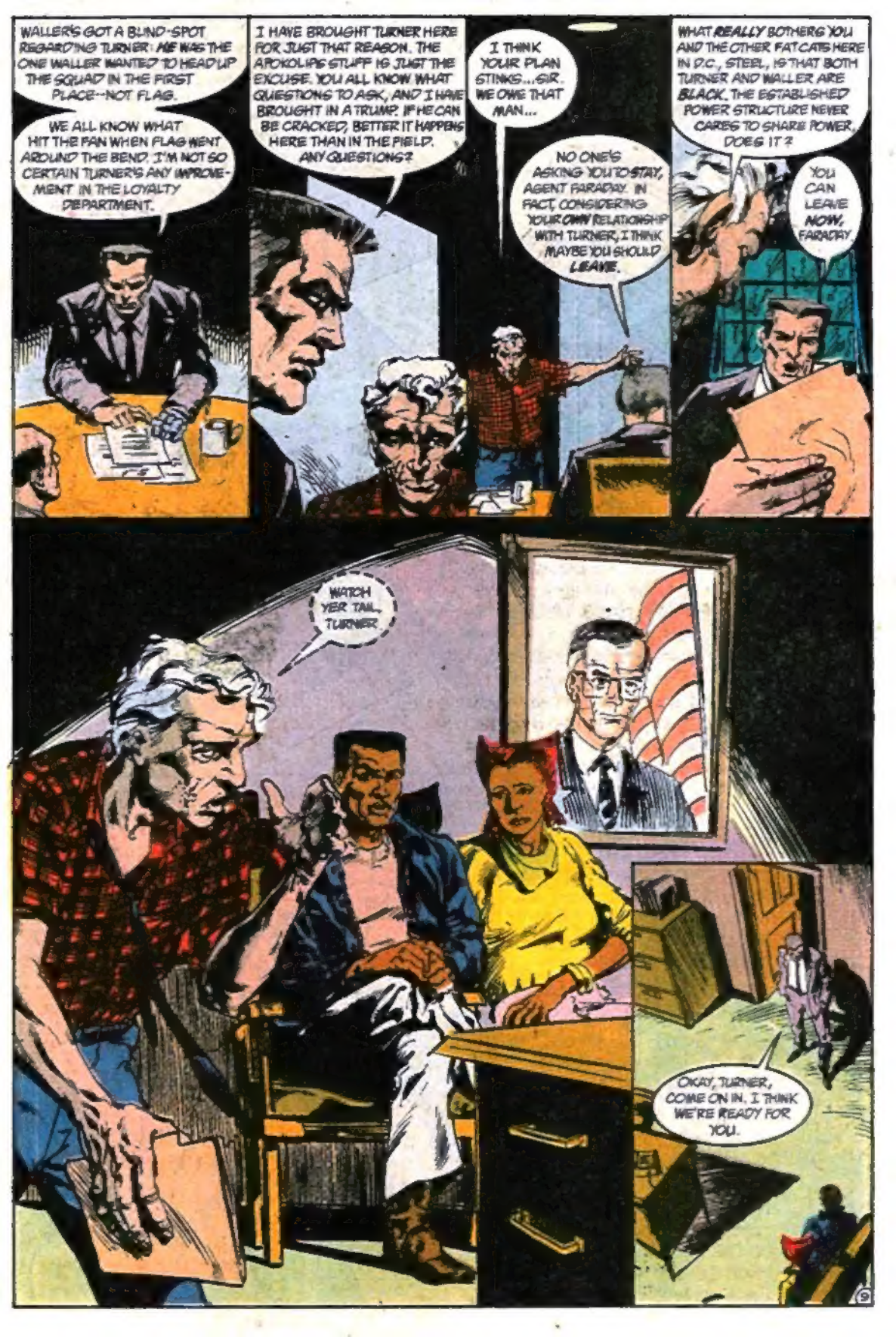

ULTIMATELY, THE LEAGUE AND RA'S AL GHUL'S PEOPLE GOT INTO A TURF WAR. ONE OF THOSE JOKERS DECIDED TO DEAL BATMAN INTO THE SITUATION, AND THEY CAME TO GOTHAM CITY.

THEY CHOSE THE TIGER TO KILL AN OLD FRIEND OF BATMAN'S--CARNIVAL OWNER KATHY KANE. BATMAN ARRIVED, AND WHILE HE FOUGHT THE TIGER, SOMEONE ELSE KILLED KANE.
THE TIGER AND BATMAN FOUGHT AND IT SEEMS HE WAS GOOD ENOUGH TO BEAT THE BATMAN.

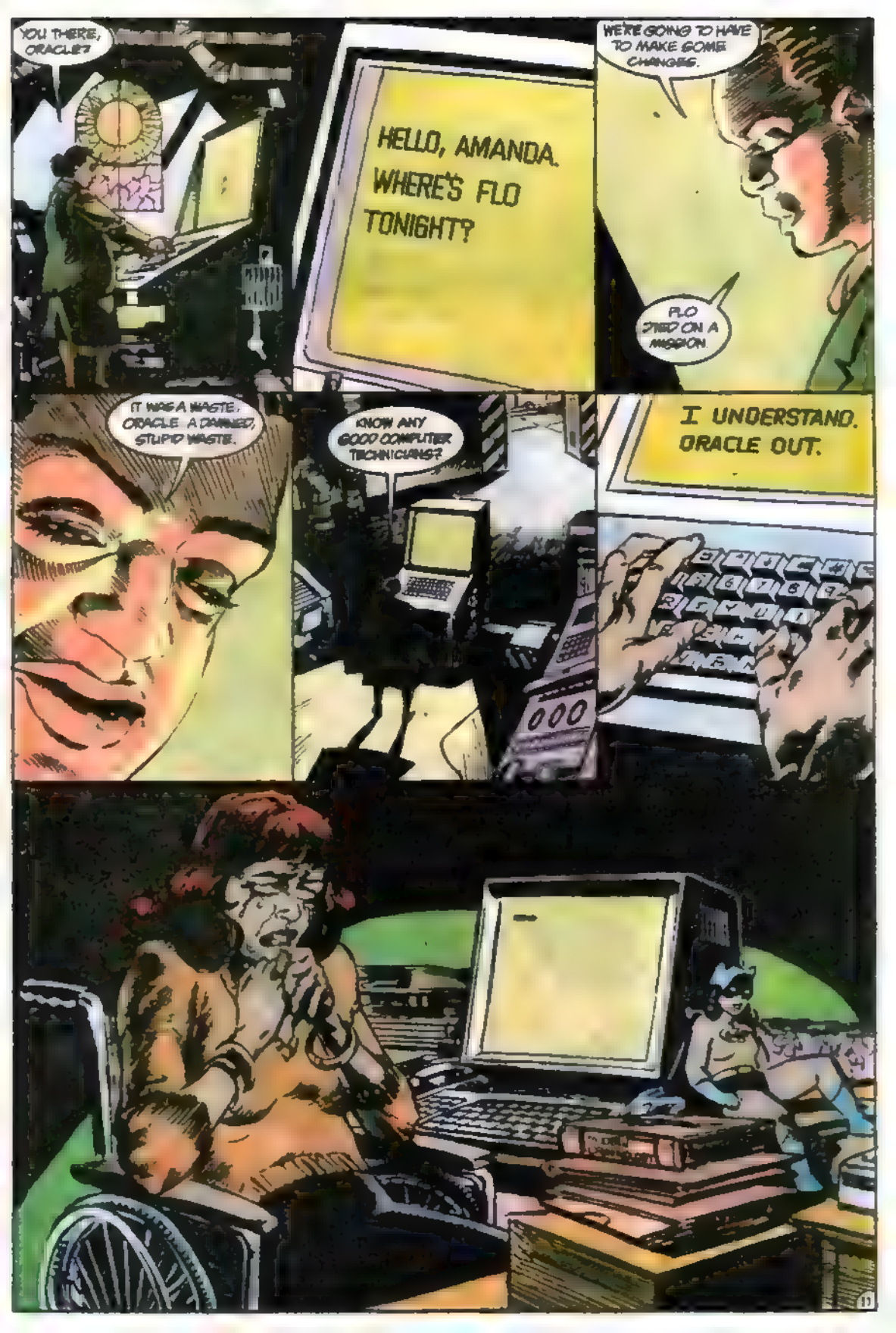
NEEDLESS TO SAY, I DECIDED TO GET BEN BACK.

"I RECRUITED COLONEL RICK FLAG--A TOP AGENT AT THE TIME--AND BROUGHT IN EVE EDEN, CODE-NAMED NIGHTSHADE, WHO HAD BEEN TRAINING. WE WENT AFTER THE TIGER AND SNATCHED HIM FROM THE LEAGUE.
"WHILE NIGHTSHADE AND I QUIETLY ELIMINATED THE UNWANTED OBSERVERS, FLAG HELD OFF THE BRONZE TIGER SINGLE-HANDEDLY. FLAG WAS ALWAYS A BETTER MAN THAN ANYONE GAVE HIM CREDIT FOR.
"I FINALLY GOT THE DROP ON HIM AND PUMPED HIM FULL OF TRANQS. IF I SAID IT WAS LIKE FIGHTING A TIGER YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME. HE WAS BESTIAL."
AMANDA WALLER WAS JUST STARTING UP HER NEW TASK FORCE X IN THOSE DAYS. SHE HEARD ABOUT TURNER AND GOT INTERESTED IN HIM--EVEN HELPED IN HIS DEPROGRAMMING.
WHEN HE WAS DEEMED FIT, WALLER GOT HIM ASSIGNED TO HER NEW SUICIDE SQUAD AND HE'S BEEN THERE EVER SINCE, RACKING UP AN IMPRESSIVE LIST OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS.
SPARE ME, FARADAY. THIS SQUAD HAS BEEN A JOKE. THEY'VE BOTCHED AS MANY MISSIONS AS THEY'VE ACCOMPLISHED.
THEY'VE BEEN AN EMBARRASSMENT. HE'S BEEN A PART OF IT.

WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN WRONG TO INVOLVE COSTUMED BOZOS. BETTER RESPONSES NEED TO BE FORMULATED.
I AGREE... FOR THE MOST PART.
AS LONG AS THERE ARE RADICAL SECURITY RISKS--ALIENS AND DEMONS AND OTHER HOO-HAH--IT MAKES SENSE TO MAINTAIN PARA-NORMAL OPERATIVES.
ONE REASON I WAS PUT IN THIS OFFICE WAS TO MAKE THE COSTUMED HEROES MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THE GOVERNMENT TO BOLSTER--RATHER THAN HAMPER--PUBLIC SUPPORT.
CHECKMATE'S BEEN FINE; THE ATOM PROJECT HAS HAD ITS BENEFITS UNTIL RECENTLY. BUT THE SQUAD...THE SUICIDE SQUAD IS IN NEED OF TIGHTER CONTROL. MUCH TIGHTER.
BEN TURNER FEELS HE OWES AMANDA WALLER A LOT, FOR BRINGING HIM BACK TO SANITY.
HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN HER SOLDIER. ALWAYS THERE WHEN NEEDED--LIKE WHEN FLAG WENT AWOL. WE ALL KNOW WHAT A COCK-UP THAT WAS. AND I'M NOT SURE WE HAVEN'T GOT ANOTHER ONE BREWING WITH TURNER.


WALLER'S GOT A BLIND-SPOT REGARDING TURNER: HE WAS THE ONE WALLER WANTED TO HEAD UP THE SQUAD IN THE FIRST PLACE--NOT FLAG.
WE ALL KNOW WHAT HIT THE FAN WHEN FLAG WENT AROUND THE BEND. I'M NOT SO CERTAIN TURNER'S ANY IMPROVEMENT IN THE LOYALTY DEPARTMENT.
I HAVE BROUGHT TURNER HERE FOR JUST THAT REASON. THE APOKOLIPS STUFF IS JUST THE EXCUSE. YOU ALL KNOW WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK, AND I HAVE BROUGHT IN A TRUMP. IF HE CAN BE CRACKED, BETTER IT HAPPENS HERE THAN IN THE FIELD. ANY QUESTIONS?
I THINK YOUR PLAN STINKS...SIR. WE OWE THAT MAN...
NO ONE'S ASKING YOU TO STAY, AGENT FARADAY. IN FACT, CONSIDERING YOUR OWN RELATIONSHIP WITH TURNER, I THINK MAYBE YOU SHOULD LEAVE.
WHAT REALLY BOTHERS YOU AND THE OTHER FAT CATS HERE IN D.C., STEEL, IS THAT BOTH TURNER AND WALLER ARE BLACK. THE ESTABLISHED POWER STRUCTURE NEVER CARES TO SHARE POWER, DOES IT?
YOU CAN LEAVE NOW, FARADAY.
WATCH YER TAIL, TURNER.
OKAY, TURNER, COME ON IN. I THINK WE'RE READY FOR YOU.
9

YOU KNOW, I THOUGHT MAYBE IT WAS THAT FLU BOOMERBUTT HAD BEFORE WE WENT TO LOS ANGELES AND THAT ICKY MANSION... OR MAYBE THE COLD PUNCH I HAD BEFORE APOKOLIPS
JEWLEE...
WHATEVER I HAVE, OR WHITE, I'M SURE I GOT IT FROM PUNCH
OH YOU HAVE THAT RIGHT, CHILD
NOW THINK, GIRL, WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU HAD YOUR PERIOD?
LESSEE, IT WAS RIGHT BEFORE LOS ANGELES, OR WAS IT THAT JOB WE DID IN OSAPEN...FOUR, FIVE...OOOOH, I DON'T KNOW
DOES THREE AND A HALF MONTHS SOUND RIGHT? IT BETTER, BECAUSE THAT'S HOW FAR ALONG THE BABY IS.
BABY?
YOU'RE PREGNANT, CHILD
10


YOU THERE, ORACLE?
HELLO, AMANDA. WHERE'S FLO TONIGHT?
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE SOME CHANGES.
FLO DIED ON A MISSION.
IT WAS A WASTE, ORACLE. A DAMNED, STUPID WASTE.
KNOW ANY GOOD COMPUTER TECHNICIANS?
I UNDERSTAND. ORACLE OUT.

THIS IS COLONEL STONEMAN AND MR. GRISWOLD TURNER. THEY'RE MEN WHO WORK FOR THE PRESIDENT, JUST LIKE I DO -- JUST LIKE YOU DO. WE'D LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS.
YOU'RE A PROFESSIONAL, TURNER, SO I'M NOT GOING TO PLAY GAMES WITH YOU.
WHY DID YOU DIRECTLY DISOBEY MY ORDERS AND GO TO APOKOLIPS?
I DISOBEYED NO ORDER. I WAS TOLD NOT TO CONTACT MISTER MIRACLE AND TOLD NOT TO USE FELONS.
I DIDN'T
YOUR ORDERS NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THE FOREVER PEOPLE OR VOLUNTEERS FOUND IN ARTILLERY.
MY ORDERS WERE VERY CLEAR, TURNER. DO NOT GO TO APOKOLIPS. HOW CAN I PERMIT YOU TO REMAIN MISSIONS LEADER IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE MOST BASIC OF INSTRUCTIONS?

THE TITLE SUICIDE SQUAD WAS NOT PICKED OUT OF A HAT. THEY COULD HAVE 100% CASUALTIES AND STILL NOT BE CONSIDERED HEAVY LOSSES. WHY PUT YOUR CAREER IN JEOPARDY FOR HIGH-RISK TYPES?
SIR, THOSE WERE NOT ONLY MY FRIENDS BUT ALSO THE CORE OF OUR MISSION OPERATIONS TEAM. WE NEEDED THEM FOR SARGE STEEL'S MISSION AGAINST THE LOA.
I DID WHAT I FELT I HAD TO, TO SAVE THE SQUAD AND SECURE THE FUTURE MISSIONS. MY CHOICE WAS CLEAR, SIR, AND WE CAME BACK.
ACTUALLY, MR. TURNER, IT SEEMS YOU CAME BACK...BUT THERE WERE SOME CASUALTIES AND ONE MIA.*
YEAH, FLO CRAWLEY, DR. LIGHT AND FIELD AGENT BRISCOE BOUGHT IT ON THAT ROCK. THEY WERE ALL DUPED BY LASHINA... YOU KNOW HER AS DUCHESS.
AND SHADE... HE'S PROBABLY BACK IN HIS DIMENSION.
*MISSING IN ACTION--G.I. RASPLER
THAT IS NOT A VERY GOOD RECORD, MR. TURNER. DID YOU NOT NEED DR. LIGHT FOR THE LOA MISSION?
YES. WE HAVE MADE ALTERNATE PLANS. I DID WHAT I THOUGHT WAS BEST AND--
--AND YOU IGNORED MY ORDERS! DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S A PROBLEM, TURNER?

AS YOU KNOW...DIRECTOR STEEL, THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY IS EXPECTED TO INTERPRET ORDERS IN A...BROADER FASHION THAN THE MILITARY.
YOU MAY SNAP TO AND DO AS YOU'RE TOLD WITHOUT QUESTION, SIR, BUT I HAVE TO RELY ON AND ANSWER TO MY CONSCIENCE. I WILL NOT COMPROMISE THAT.
NO?
YOU HAVE IN THE PAST.
YOUR VERY FIRST ASSIGNMENT WAS TO TERMINATE THE JIHAD MEMBER CALLED RAMAN. YOU LET HIM LIVE AS A CRIPPLE. YOU SAID YOU WILL NOT KILL AND THAT WAS THAT.
BUT I KNOW YOU HAVE KILLED OFTEN. IN FACT, YOU STARTED AT AGE 10. WOKE UP AND FOUND YOUR FOLKS BEING ASSAULTED IN THE LIVING ROOM BY A WHITE BURGLAR. POLICE REPORTS HAVE IT YOU WENT BERSERK.
"A TEN-YEAR-OLD BOY GRABS A CARVING KNIFE AND STABS A MAN SO OFTEN THAT HE DIES FROM HIS WOUNDS. EXPLAIN THAT, TURNER."
"I...I DON'T KILL ANYMORE."

"LOST CONTROL, DID YOU, BEN?"

"WHEN I SAW THAT MAN BEATING MY FATHER, I... AS I LOOKED DOWN ON THAT... THE DEAD BODY... I FELT SORRY AND SCARED.

"BUT WHAT SCARED ME WAS THAT I WASN'T SORRY FOR KILLING HIM. I WAS SORRY IT ENDED SO SOON."

"THAT'S WHY I GOT INTO THE MARTIAL ARTS. TO CONTROL THE RAGE.

"BUT I STILL GOT OFF ON THE CONFLICT AND IT WASN'T THE RAGE THAT NEEDED CONTROLLING.

"IT WAS THE JOY. THE JOY I FELT KNOWING THAT EVERY DAY I LEARNED BETTER HOW TO HURT PEOPLE. AND I KNEW THAT I WAS REALLY GOOD.

"BETTER THAN MY TEACHERS.

"TAE KWAN DO IS SUPPOSED TO TEACH YOU DISCIPLINE. BUT DISCIPLINE WASN'T ENOUGH. MY ANGER LED TO VIOLENCE REAL EASILY, AND THE VIOLENCE...

"THE VIOLENCE LED ME INTO A LOT OF TROUBLE

"I KNEW I WAS IN A BAD WAY. I KNEW THAT THE MORE I LEARNED, THE GREATER THE CHANCES WERE THAT I WAS GOING TO END UP IN JAIL, OR IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR

"TAKING MY PROBLEM TO THE SOURCE SEEMED TO MAKE SENSE AT THE TIME

"BUT SOME MASTERS--LIKE KIRISH--SAW THE RAGE AND JOY IN MY MOVES. RATHER THAN HELP ME FOCUS MY WILLPOWER, THEY SAW ME AS A WAY TO BETTER THEMSELVES.

"KIRISH EXPLOITED MY PAIN AND IT TO CONTROL ME. SAW ME AS A CHALLENGE, I GUESS. NOT AS A MAN."

"I ENDED UP LIKING THE VIOLENCE, AND THAT REPULSED ME. I KNEW IF I DIDN'T SUBDUE IT, I'D LOSE MYSELF IN IT FOREVER.
"FINALLY I FOUND THE O-SENSEI, WHO SHOWED ME THE WAY. I USE THAT ANGER NOW AS MY WEAPON. IT DOESN'T USE ME."
WE HAVE REPORTS THAT THE O-SENSEI CAME TO AMERICA LAST YEAR—HE WAS IN SEATTLE, HUB CITY AND GOTHAM... BUT HE DIDN'T SEE YOU. WHY?
WHEN I WAS WITH THE LEAGUE, I LEARNED TO KILL AGAIN. I SHAMED MY MASTER.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE, STEEL, GOING ON MISSIONS AND WANTING TO KILL? IT'S A STRUGGLE EVERY TIME I LEAVE BELLE REVE.
BUT I KNOW NOW THAT I AM THE MASTER OF MY OWN POWER!
YET, YOU CONTINUE IN A JOB WHERE YOU MUST FIGHT.
MY DESIRE MUST BE CONSTANTLY CHALLENGED. IT'S POWERFUL IN ITS OWN RIGHT. IT DOESN'T GO AWAY.
I SEE. AND YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF... CURED? IN CONTROL?
YES.
THEN YOU'LL PUT THIS ON FOR ME?

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ASKING, STEEL.
THEN MAKE ME UNDERSTAND
"AFTER MOOGHI--MY... MY LOVER--WAS KILLED, I WAS CAPTURED BY THE LEAGUE OF ASSASSINS.
"THE LEAGUE'S LEADER, THE SENSEI, WAS VERY CAREFUL WHEN HE SPOKE TO ME. HE FOUND MY ANGER WITHOUT TAPPING IT. SAID THINGS, MADE ME WANT TO PUT MY LIFE IN HIS HANDS.
"WE TALKED ABOUT MY ANGER AND THE WAYS THE O-SENSEI SHOWED ME TO CHANNEL IT. THE SENSEI SAID IT COULD BE SENT AWAY. DIVERTED FROM ME, SO I WOULD NEVER HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT AGAIN
"HE HAD ME BUILD THE TIGER MASK. TOLD ME TO PUT THE ANGER IN THE MASK. GIVE IT A NAME. THE BRONZE TIGER. THE ANGER WOULD DWELL THERE.
"IT WORKED. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY ADULT LIFE I WAS FREE FROM THE RAGE. I EVEN BREATHED DIFFERENTLY.
"THE ANGER WAS STILL THERE, OF COURSE. BUT IT WASN'T MY PROBLEM. WHEN I WORE THE MASK... IT WAS THE BRONZE TIGER WHO DEALT DEATH IN JOY AND RAGE."
7

"WITH THAT MASK ON I WAS FEARED AROUND THE WORLD.
"THE SENSEI WAS SMART. I RARELY TOOK THE MASK OFF. HE HAD ME CONSTANTLY ON THE GO, FURTHER BINDING ME TO HIM AND HIS GOALS.
"I REMEMBER THINGS ONLY THROUGH A HAZE OF RAGE--OF BLOOD. I REMEMBER HOWLING AT FLAG AND FARADAY AND NIGHTSHADE WHEN THEY CAME FOR ME.
"EVEN WITHOUT THE MASK, I WAS STILL THE SENSEI'S CREATURE. THE O-SENSEI'S WORK HAD BEEN UNDONE. THE ANGER CONTROLLED ME.
"BUT MY RAGE RAN UP AGAINST A WALL. IT COULDN'T CONSUME, THAT IT COULDN'T SCARE. THE LADY AND THE TIGER GUESS WHO WON?"
18

"SHE BROKE ME AND THEN SHE PUT ME BACK TOGETHER. SHE MADE ME TAKE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MY ACTIONS. SHE TAUGHT ME THAT I HAD TO BE BEN TURNER AGAIN
"I BURNED THE MASK, BURNED THE ANGER AND THE PAST I WAS WHOLE ONCE MORE AND I SWORE I WOULDN'T KILL AGAIN."
THEN THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH PUTTING THE MASK ON NOW, IS THERE? IT'S ONLY A COPY, RIGHT?
YOU HAVE MASTERED YOURSELF, YOU SAID, RIGHT?
OR HAVE YOU? I WANT THE TRUTH, TURNER! AFRAID YOU'LL PUT IT ON AND LOSE IT? ARE YOU THAT FRAGILE?
ARE YOU AFRAID THAT YOU'LL PUT IT ON AND DISCOVER THE TRUTH ONCE AND FOR ALL?

AND THERE YOU HAVE IT, TURNER. THERE'S THE SECRET YOU'RE TRYING TO HIDE. YOU WANT TO CRACK AND LOSE CONTROL.
YOU MISS IT.
THAT'S WHY YOU NEVER TOOK COMMAND OF THE SQUAD AT FIRST. YOU COULDN'T BE TRUSTED. NOT EVEN BY AMANDA WALLER, YOUR GAMOR. YOU WERE GAPPER AS THE NUMBER TWO MAN.
AND NOW THAT YOU'RE IN COMMAND, YOU CAN'T EVEN FOLLOW A SIMPLE ORDER. PUT THE MASK ON.
YOU LOSE IT NOW. WE'LL ALL KNOW YOU'VE BEEN LYING TO YOURSELF— AND AMANDA—ALL THIS TIME.
THE TRUTH IS THAT BEN TURNER LIKES THE VIOLENCE.
BEN TURNER. NOT THE BRONZE TIGER. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN YOU, BEN, AND YOU LOVE IT!
YOU LIKE HURTING. THAT'S WHY YOU DIDN'T KILL RAHAN. YOU LIKED MAKING HIM SUFFER.
YES.

YES!
BEN!
WHAT HAPPENED?

WELL, WASN'T THAT FUN?
IT HAD TO BE DONE, STEEL. BETTER HE CRACKED HERE THAN IN THE FIELD, LIKE FLAG DID.
FIRST FLAG WITH THE SENATOR CRAY FIASCO AND NOW TURNER. WALLER SURE KNOWS HOW TO PICK 'EM.
WALLER'S THE WORST OF THE LOT. SHE KNEW THIS DUCHESS WAS LASHINA AND STILL SHE KEPT HER AROUND, ALMOST LIKE SHE WAS BEGGING FOR THIS APOCALIPS DISASTER TO HAPPEN!
LET'S FACE IT--SO LONG AS WALLER'S ANYWHERE NEAR THE SQUAD, THE POTENTIAL FOR EMBARRASSMENT TO THIS ADMINISTRATION IS REAL HIGH. WE'RE SITTING ON A P.R. H-BOMB AND IT'S TICKING.
YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S GOING TO BLOW UP--RIGHT IN OUR FACES. MAYBE NOT TODAY BUT SOON. CHECKMATE CAN HANDLE THE COSTUMED CRIMINALS AND THE LOA. THE SQUAD WILL HAVE TO BE SHUT DOWN--FOREVER.
BENNN!
NEXT ISSUE: ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE!
THE SQUAD IS CHANGED FOREVER!

SUICIDE NOTES

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L-5400

Pretty intense issue, no?

We're catching up on the mail so we're no longer lagging a full five issues behind. Let's dispense with the opening comments and get to it!

Dear Squad,

Issue #33 really threw me a curve. Thanks to several hints in past issues and previews of upcoming ones, Lashina's return to Apokolips was expected; her shamelessly treacherous and savage actions toward her fellow Squad members were not. Despite her past allegiances, I expected Lashina to follow the path taken by other characters in situations similar to hers. Namely, that she would be so impressed by the bravery of her comrades that she would sever all ties with Apokolips and become a fully-trusted member of the Squad. But instead ... the last five pages were crafted exceptionally well. I could actually feel the excitement as Lashina and crew were making their escape. I'm still not quite ready to give up on our former Duchess. Maybe, things aren't *quite* what they seem. After all, why would she need an assault team simply to claim leadership of the Female Furies? If Lashina does return to Granny's fold, she will be sorely missed. On more than one occasion, she was a deciding factor in the Squad's victories. I also can't wait to see what happens to Shade. Regardless of what happens on Apokolips, Rac's relationship with the rest of the team can never be the same again. You've really got me guessing on this one, John and Kim. I just hope that the Tiger has more people to back him up than the asinine Dr. Light, Punch, and Jewelee. I still think that Croc would make a great addition to the Squad, and hey, what about the Black Spider?

The exchange between Ravan and Kobra was really cool. The portrayal of Ravan as a "hero" wasn't something that I expected, at least not so soon. Unfortunately, his exoskeleton may place him at a disadvantage in any future battles with Kobra. Show a little mercy, though, and don't kill him, okay?

My only remaining fear, besides Lashina's apparent betrayal of the Squad, is the promised battle between Granny Goodness and the Wall. Pardon me, but the very idea is ridiculous. The Wall doesn't stand a chance against Granny. Despite her appearance, Granny Goodness is a "new god." And though super-human physical traits don't appear to be common to all of the gods, Granny should possess more than enough strength to clean Waller's clock. I hope their battle won't be as contrived as I'm fearing.

William Duncan
2715 Forbes Drive
Montgomery, AL 36110

*****

Dear Suicide Scribes,

Issue #33 was nothing short of spectacular! From beginning to end, I was amazed at the fluidity of the story; everything happened logically, and I never questioned any of Lashina's actions.

It seems John Ostrander never disappoints me, yet I did miss Kim Yale's influence. I hope to see her return soon.

The art in issue #33 was all I could ask for. It seems we have another great team in John Snyder-Geof Isherwood, and I hope Geof will stay on as regular inker. The cover to #33 was excellent, making me happy Karl Kesel is still involved with this title.

Dan Raspler, welcome to the Squad. I hope your stay is an enjoyable one.

Scott R. Pyle
502 Giffin Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15210

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Dear Creative Team,

SUICIDE SQUAD #33 was the best issue you've come out with so far in the entire series. Although nobody died, resigned or got pied, the issue was still a tour de force, full of plot twists and turns, thick with rich characterizations—and one I thoroughly enjoyed. One has to be blind not to see that the Squad is headed for another revolutionary change as a result of this storyline. The true star of this issue was, of course, Duchess/Lashina. She dominated the story and showed her true mettle and worth as an accomplished fighter and skilled tactician. Like everyone else, I've been anticipating whatever delicious plot she has had in store for the group, and I wasn't disappointed in the least. Her hand-picked team was an effective and formidable one, and I absolutely love the fact that some were willing to join her while others had to be "persuaded." The abduction scenes of the individual Squad members were my favorite parts of the book, and her blackmailing of Shade was quite devious. Yes, Duchess shone through quite nicely in this issue. She orchestrated the capture of seven people and coerced three others into helping her. That's quite a feat in my book. The only thing that prevents this act from being admirable is her selfishness. Yes, she organized a clever scheme, but look at her reason. She wanted revenge against Bernadeth and the Female Furies. That's the only thought on her mind, her sole driving force. Does it matter to her that the people she's fought side by side with are now in peril because of her? Does she care that she's shamelessly risking the lives of some of the people who *haven't* deserted her during the many battles she's fought in since she's been on Earth? Does she think at all about the consequences this might have on anyone other than herself? No. But that's Duchess all over. That's what makes her a flawed individual. That's what makes her interesting. That's what makes her *real*. I will miss her.

The addition of Poison Ivy into the Squad was a welcome development and it was masterful how you thrust her into the thick of the storyline the way you did. She will make a good replacement for Duchess, as I'm sure this will undoubtedly be Lashina's final mission with the team. As to what you've got in store for the other members of the group, I'm *not* so sure. We've already acknowledged that Duchess is hardly the type to trust, hence I think Shade will be disappointed when he finds he's been duped into helping her. I *do* think his days with the Squad are numbered; however, as eventually he will find his way back to Meta. I feel you have a less kind fate in store for Flo. I wouldn't be at all surprised if there ends up being a wreath with her name on it after all this is over. As for Count Vertigo, I sincerely hope he sticks around for a while, but with the way Dr. McCoy's been talking lately, that doesn't seem likely. If you *do* kill him off, please give him a slam-bang farewell. He's too good a character to waste for the sake of dramatic purpose alone. I fear that the only way out of the Squad for him is death. Give

it meaning. If you *do* want cannon fodder, I wouldn't mind a bit if you sent Boomerang, Punch, or Dr. Light to the Great Beyond.

Before I sign off, the lettering in this issue was simply outstanding. That's something I rarely notice, but I sure did this time. Great job, Mr. Klein.

David J. Harrington
255 C John Burke Drive
Glens Falls, NY 12801

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Dearest People,

Well, I must admit, I was a bit disappointed that Amanda and Granny didn't go at it for more than one panel in SUICIDE SQUAD #34, but, since I'm sure this will be rectified next issue, I have got to say that I loved the issue. It justified all my giggling to myself after issue #33.

Oh, sure, the Forever People appearing *were* a bit *deus ex machina* and Briscoe's and Sheba's deaths *were* very distressing (sadly, it seems that, true to life, the characters without powers are always the ones most likely to die in combat). It's a pity the poor, severely mentally disturbed helicopter pilot and his baby had to die as cannon fodder for Lashina.

At any rate, I look forward to seeing a lot of characters getting severely maimed next issue (well, not really look forward, but if a lot of characters *did*, it would be the most realistic battle on Apokolips I've seen—usually, despite the blood-hungry Para-demons and other hostile, extremely powerful locals, nobody even gets scratched on that orb).

R. Kevin Doyle
325 Awini Place
Honolulu, HI 96825

Well, leaving battles unscathed is something that doesn't happen too often to Squad members, Kevin. We'll be feeling the effects of this trip to Apokolips for months to come.

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Dear Dan,

"Into the Angry Planet" was a wonderful overture to what I expect will be the Suicide Squad's fiercest battle to date. Through the gathering of the troops, one cannot expect this trip to Apokolips to be without incident. I really don't want to see any of these members die, but I think the Suicide Squad will be living up to its name on this mission. I always enjoy the action scenes in SUICIDE SQUAD, and this issue was loaded with them! And I also liked the way each member was included in the story, even if he or she wasn't a part of the Apokolips-bound.

Some of the individual members are in for a tough time, judging from this issue. I'm not pleased by the way Shade turned against Vixen and the team for the chance to return home. I had considered him one of the good guys, but after thinking about it, John never did give the readers any indications that Shade was noble or altruistic. Still, I would like to see him and his actions in this issue reconciled with the team after they return to Belle Reve. As a faction of the Suicide Squad heads to Apokolips, it is one of the minor characters who faces the most peril. I sincerely hope that Flo survives this journey. I would hate to see her marooned or killed on Apokolips because I feel the unrequited love resolved by death has been played out once too often. I think it would create more tension and be more interesting to let her relationship with Ben and Mari be manifested more. Maybe it could even be handled more sympathetically, especially if Oracle becomes her shoulder to cry on.

The inclusion of Nightshade and Poison Ivy in this storyline is appreciated. Ivy is a villainess with great potential, and her presence should stir up some of the men on the Squad. Nightshade is one of my favorites from the Squad, and it seems that her resignation is useless in severing her ties to the team. I would like to see her guest-star in these pages periodically, but I'd like it even more if she found a berth in another book.

Jim Kelly
20 Randall Avenue, Apt. 1W
Freeport, NY 11520

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Dear Editor,

Some quick observations are in order:

1) Shade stands up to Lashina upon reaching Apokolips. He finally turns his emotions loose and nearly trashes her. Decidedly different.

2) Flo's having second thoughts about even taking Lashina up on her offer for this trip. I thought she'd be the sacrificial lamb this issue, but noooo, you had to wreck Sheba and send Briscoe packing to the Twilight Zone for good.

3) I knew it! Major Victory is a wimpy dweeb in a costume! "The power's in the costume, not me!" Gag me with a spoon, Major Dingaling. You're just moping because you took a beating. I think I saw a few of your friends in one of those phone book commercials, filed under "Vanity Cases."

4) Owww! The Wall is a wicked warrior! Step aside, Rambo. Too bad Granny didn't buy the farm, to balance the books. Maybe next time.

5) Snyder and Isherwood are on a major roll! Keep Geof around forever, just to keep that realistic feel to John's pencils. Can JO and KY top this epic? Right now, I doubt it.

6) Request line: Bring back Penguin and the villains who've been ridiculed and embarrassed in the JLI books.

Jacob Gilbert
118 Fourth Street, Apt. 1
Troy, NY 12180

Dear Suicide crew,

Wow. That was my reaction to the powerful cover for SS #34. Imagine my reaction to the story inside. John and Kim, you two have written one of your best stories so far, in my opinion. The mix of action, suspense, mystery and everything else made it my favorite comic of the week. I cannot believe that Briscoe died. I think that Sheba should be redone and have Ifrit as the new pilot, since she is just hanging around doing nothing. As for Amanda, I think this issue proves just how tough she really is and I can hardly wait for her to kick Granny's fat butt.

Lashina is really a cold-hearted witch and it surprised me that she couldn't care less if Ivy died even though Ivy was an important part in her plan. Speaking of Poison Ivy, she is supposed to be a vicious person, but in this she seems like a little child who just wants to have fun. It is good to see Nightshade again, but I do hope that you highlight her a little more.

David Roberts
1047 West Belden
Chicago, IL 60614

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Next month brings about the final curtain in the SUICIDE SQUAD as it's been known. John, Kim, and Dan have been working out some elaborate plans and this book will be going through some major changes. We'll discuss them in detail next month, but suffice it to say that Amanda's covert role in the government will not last forever.

SO ... next month we'll be seeing not only the final face-off between Amanda and Sarge Steel (her superior in the government), but also between the LOA and the Suicide Squad. Not to mention repercussions, reflections, and recitations. All this for one dollar. Can't go wrong, can you?

And that's a wrap. Keep smiling!

—Bob Greenberger
Warp-drive repairman

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